

EXHIBIT 311

1 IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
2 IN THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

3
4 GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES
5 VIRGIN ISLANDS,

6 Plaintiff

7 vs.

No. 22-cv-10904-JSR

8 JPMORGAN CHASE BANK, N.A.,

9 Defendant.

10 _____
11 JPMORGAN CHASE BANK, N.A.,

12 Third-Party Plaintiff,

13 v.

14 JAMES EDWARD STALEY,
15 Third-Party Defendant.

16 _____
17 THE ORAL DEPOSITION OF MARGARITA BENJAMIN was
18 taken on the 26th day of May, 2023 at the Ritz-Carlton
19 Hotel, 6900 Great Bay, Nazareth, St. Thomas, U.S.
20 Virgin Islands, between the hours of 3:50 p.m. and 9:22
21 p.m. pursuant to Notice and Federal Rules of Civil
22 Procedure.

23 _____
24 Reported by:

25 DESIREE D. HILL
 Registered Merit Reporter
 Hill's Reporting Services
 P.O. Box 307501
 St. Thomas, Virgin Islands
 (340) 777-6466

1 THE WITNESS: I can't say to the level
2 of backlog in the governor's office, but the
3 timeline in which to expedite the completion
4 by removing the governor would be
5 facilitate -- would be expeditious. And then
6 there was also an analysis that was done that
7 looked at other jurisdictions and how they did
8 their decisions relating to tax incentives.

9 Q. And what is the EDA?

10 A. The Economic Development Authority is the
11 semiautonomous entity under the Government of the
12 U.S. Virgin Islands, and it's primarily tasked with
13 ensuring that we can enhance, diversify and grow the
14 economy of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

15 When we do that, we use several different
16 manners. There are Enterprise Zone Commission that
17 deals with the depressed areas and zones. We have
18 the Economic Development Commission that deals with
19 tax incentives, and we have our Industrial Park
20 Corporation, as well as our Economic Development Bank
21 that does small business lending.

22 Q. So focusing in on the Economic Development
23 Commission, what is their specific function?

24 A. The function of the Economic Development
25 Commission is to grow the economy and we do so by

1 completed at the same time, which would have been the
2 closeout for the Financial Trust first certificate
3 and the extension certificate, which would have been
4 around 2014.

5 And then Southern Trust would have had
6 their audit review, and their audit review would have
7 been around 2017, if I recall correctly.

8 And then the final wrap-up report would
9 have been done in 2022.

10 Q. And what prompted those audits by EDC?

11 MR. ACKERMAN: Object to form.

12 THE WITNESS: As part of the normal
13 task, the compliance division is tasked with
14 reviewing reports that are filed, and also
15 writing written reports on the companies.

16 So as part of the normal course,
17 especially if the company is coming for an
18 extension or modification, we are tasked with
19 ensuring that we have a report that reflects
20 their activities under their certificate to the
21 period that we have the most current filing.

22 Q. (By Mr. O'Laughlin:) So each of the audits
23 undertaken by the EDC of Epstein's companies were part
24 of the regular compliance function, correct?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. They weren't undertaken based on some news
2 tip or some concerns specific to Jeffrey Epstein,
3 correct?

4 A. Not that I'm aware of.

5 Q. Okay. Are you aware of any investigation
6 that was outside of the normal compliance audits into
7 Epstein by the EDC?

8 A. No, sir.

9 Q. So at no point prior to December 1, 2020
10 did the EDC undertake any investigations into Epstein
11 or his companies beyond the normal compliance
12 function?

13 MR. ACKERMAN: Object to form.

14 THE WITNESS: All of the written reports
15 reflected there are part of the standard
16 compliance review.

17 Any other investigation would have been
18 documented and part of the file. I have no
19 knowledge of such.

20 Q. (By Mr. O'Laughlin:) You're not aware of
21 any additional investigations?

22 A. Correct, sir.

23 MR. ACKERMAN: Objection. Go ahead.

24 Q. (By Mr. O'Laughlin:) let's -- so the email
25 that we're looking at had several attachments to it,

1 to rap up pretty quickly.

2 VIDEOGRAPHER: We are going off the
3 record. The time is 8:52 p.m., Friday,
4 May 26th, 2023. We're off the record.

5 (Break taken.)

6 VIDEOGRAPHER: We are going back on the
7 record after a short break. The time is now
8 9:00 p.m., Friday, May 26th, 2023. We're on
9 the record.

10 MR. O'LAUGHLIN: Let's enter Tab 45 as
11 the next exhibit.

12 MS. WARREN: Tab 45 is in the chat as
13 Exhibit 37.

14 (Deposition Exhibit No. 37 was
15 marked for identification.)

16 Q. (By Mr. O'Laughlin:) Ms. Benjamin, let me
17 know once you've reviewed the document.

18 A. Reviewed.

19 Q. So we've talked a lot about the various
20 media inquiries received by EDA over the years. Do
21 you recognize this document?

22 A. No.

23 Q. It's a memorandum from Semele George to
24 Chanel Petersen. And it's a chart that collects the
25 various inquiries that were made to EDA and the

1 responses that were made.

2 Who is Semele George?

3 A. She's a public relations specialist in our
4 marketing division.

5 Q. And who is Chanel Petersen?

6 A. She's the former marketing director.

7 Q. So it's a long document, 40 pages of media
8 inquiries. But if you scroll down to the bottom to
9 PDF page 39.

10 A. Is 39 the last page?

11 MR. ACKERMAN: The second.

12 Q. Do you see page 39?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. So it lists the partes who were involved in
15 responses to the media inquiries and it lists you as
16 one of those individuals designated, correct?

17 A. Number 7, is that what you're looking at?

18 MR. ACKERMAN: No.

19 Q. (By Mr. O'Laughlin:) No, it's page 39
20 within the PDF.

21 MR. ACKERMAN: Second to last page of
22 the document.

23 Q. (By Mr. O'Laughlin:) Bates number 22645?

24 A. July 11, 2019?

25 MR. ACKERMAN: Keep going. Keep going.

1 Keep going. Hold on. Andy, we're having an
2 issue here.

3 THE WITNESS: Unless it's still
4 downloading.

5 MR. ACKERMAN: I think it might still
6 be. Yeah, her document is still downloading,
7 so she didn't have all the document.

8 It's 22645 is the number?

9 MR. O'LAUGHLIN: Yes.

10 THE WITNESS: This item next -- okay.
11 Okay.

12 Q. (By Mr. O'Laughlin:) So 22645 provides a
13 summary, and it states who the parties were involved
14 regarding responses to media inquiries, and it lists
15 you as one of those parties, correct?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And then below that is a summary, and it
18 reads, "55 total inquiries were received from the
19 following: Eight publications, one television station
20 and 14," and then in parentheses "13 reporters and
21 investigative journalists.

22 "In addition, three interviews were
23 conducted for the York Times by Steve Adder on
24 behalf of Maxi Goldstein, Wall Street Journal by
25 Rebecca O'Bryan, and Bloomberg News Miami by

1 Jonathan Levin."

2 Did I read that correctly?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And just to be clear, no investigations
5 were undertaken in response to any of these inquiries,
6 correct?

7 A. Not that I'm aware of.

8 Q. And no one reached out to VIPD in
9 connection with these inquiries, correct?

10 A. Not that I'm aware of.

11 Q. And no one reached out to USVI DOJ in
12 connection with these inquiries, correct?

13 MR. ACKERMAN: Objection, scope.

14 THE WITNESS: No knowledge.

15 Q. (By Mr. O'Laughlin:) And no one reached
16 out to the FBI in connection with these inquiries,
17 correct?

18 MR. ACKERMAN: Scope.

19 THE WITNESS: No knowledge.

20 Q. (By Mr. O'Laughlin:) And no one reached to
21 law enforcement of any kind in connection with these
22 inquiries, correct?

23 MR. ACKERMAN: Scope.

24 THE WITNESS: No knowledge.

25 MR. O'LAUGHLIN: Let's enter Tab 35 as